WHO IS TO BLAME?

Some Kentucky School Superintendents Make but $1 a Day.

EVEN PAY OWN POSTAGE.

But With These Pitiful Salaries They Must Put Up Bonds as High as $30,000—Average Territory Is a Hundred Square Miles.

Does the blame for school conditions lie at the door of the county superintendents or the people at large?

Many county superintendents receive salaries of $400 a year, and none of them receives more than $1,500. When a man has a salary of $400 he is of necessity forced to do something else or starve to death.

No stream can rise higher than its source. No underpaid man can put energy and thought into his work. In one of the fertile and prosperous counties of Kentucky not many miles from Cincinnati, O., I had an interview with a county superintendent whom I knew to be a "live wire" educationally. My first question was:

"How responsible does the public consider your position?"

"Do you mean as measured by my salary or by the bond I am asked to give?"

"Your bond."

"Well, I have to give a bond of $30,000. You see, I have $24,000 to pass through my hands annually to finance the forty-six schools that are scattered over the county. Besides, the schoolhouses with their equipment are an investment of about $55,000."

"You say scattered over the county. How much territory does it cover?"

"This is rather a small county, but my schools that I am forced to visit cover a territory of a hundred square miles, and they are on many kinds of roads. It is quite a proposition to supervise the work of sixty-five teachers in forty-six schools, to say nothing of the office work and the inspection that is necessary for repairs and new buildings."

I was silent for a moment, thinking of the probable salary that would be paid a manager to take charge of a business with $55,000 in the plant spending $24,000 a year running expenses and covering a territory of hundred square miles. I smiled and asked quietly:

"What salary does this county allow you for your work as county superintendent?"

"FIVE HUNDRED AND TEN DOLLARS."

"Do the county and state allow you an adequate expense account?"

He pulled a pocket notebook from his desk and smiled rather bitterly as he said:

"They do not even pay for the stamps or stationery in my office work. Let me run over this for a moment and show you how it goes. I must keep a horse and buggy or I cannot get about. As this county has never taken over the turnpikes I must pay my own toll. If I am far from home in winter time I must stay all night at some hotel. All this makes my expenses for the past year $230, leaving me at the end of the year $280. That's LESS THAN A DOLLAR A DAY FOR ABSOLUTE WORKING TIME."

"What is the highest salary paid county superintendents in the state?"

"Fifteen hundred, and they are few and far between. There are lots of them on the $400 and $600 basis, and it simply means that the fellow has to do life insurance, farm a little, take a place in a store, make a living in some way and then use what time he can spare for the schools."

IT SIMPLY MEANS THAT OUR RURAL SCHOOLS ARE NOT MANAGED AT ALL. THEY ARE MORE COMMONLY MISMANAGED.

Education for the mass of the people is an investment and a business proposition. With a carefully educated population a state or a community can move forward in a desert, anywhere you place them. With an illiterate population the finest country on the globe cannot force them to make good. Brains, trained brains, is the insistent call of the twentieth century. Does Kentucky hear that call? Business and prosperity follow brains; lawlessness and poverty follow illiteracy. Kentucky will be out of step with the onward sweep of the hurrying twentieth century so long as she allows thirteen children out of every hundred to grow into manhood and womanhood robbed of the divine right of being able at least to read and to write.

In order that Kentucky may occupy a place in the forefront in the matter of education, a movement has been inaugurated for the improvement of county schools.

Indifference due to a failure to appreciate the real value of education is one of the very serious obstacles which have confronted every movement toward a higher standard of educational work. In the last few years greater interest has been exhibited generally over the state, indicating in a decided manner that our people were shaking off the lethargy of the past and were aspiring to place the state on a sound, progressive educational basis.

Every citizen must rejoice over this awakening, and all should now unite in a continuous, earnest effort to atone for neglect of the past. It would be a useless task, in view of this growing appreciation of the importance and value of education, to make any argument or submit any extended report in its behalf.

The Newest Probationer

By Annie Hinrichsen

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The young physician looked at the girl with the helpless exasperation induced by long and unsuccessful argument.

"Can you not realize the absolute slavery to which you are sentencing yourself?" he demanded.

Miss Helm tilted her chin a trifle higher. "To me it will not be slavery. I have chosen my life work. I shall be very happy in it."

"In a month you will ge glad to give it up."

"I am tired of hearing that," she flared. "Every friend I have has said the same thing—that I shall give it up. I shall be a trained nurse and a successful one."

"But I want you to marry me."

"I prefer to spend my days with the sick and the suffering."

"Don't do it, Janet, dear. Marry me and—"

"I won't marry you, Lester," she said irritably, "and I want you to stop asking me."

Dr. Melville's patients at St. Mary's received a great deal of his attention, especially the ones in the charity wards. In these wards the probation nurses worked. Hospital custom decrees that the newest probationer shall do the most menial tasks in the institution.

Each morning when Dr. Melville visited the charity wards he saw Janet Helm, the newest probationer, practicing the lessons the head nurse had taught her. She scoured brass and woodwork and bathtubs. She washed bottles, cleaned instruments and polished floors. One day he stopped beside her as she knelt on the floor.

"Miss Helm," he said with a malicious emphasis, "how do you like nursing?"

She shook out the oiled floor cloth she was using and smiled merrily up at him. "I love it. I am perfectly happy. Go to your patients and don't disturb me. And be careful not to track dust over my clean floors."

Several days later Dr. Melville found Janet sitting beside the bed of the hospital's oldest inhabitant.

"I have been promoted," she announced proudly. "I no longer scrub. I have a patient."

"Glory be," ejaculated the old lady. "It is sure a blessed saint they have given me for my nurse. Such tenderness and gentleness were never before in a woman's fingers as are in these lily hands.

"Now, am I not a real nurse?" asked Janet, triumphantly. Her voice was lowered and the deaf old lady could not hear her words. "I am bringing happiness and comfort to this helpless old woman. Can there be a nobler task? What sweeter compensation can there be than the gratitude of this poor, unfortunate woman?"

As she spoke, the spoon with which she was feeding her patient slipped and the hot broth spilled on Mrs. O'Brien's neck. There was a yell of rage. Two skinny fists were shaken savagely at the girl. From the old woman's toothless mouth came oaths and fearful objurgations.

"Yes," said Dr. Melville, under the continued storm of Mrs. O'Brien's maledictions, "you will find no sweeter compensation than the gratitude of this helpless old lady."

Three months after Janet had entered the hospital she and Dr. Melville were leaving the ward together one evening.

"Miss Helen," said the head nurse of the ward, "Miss Sprague wishes to see you in her office."

Janet's face whitened and a look of anxiety came into her eyes. Miss Sprague was the superintendent of the hospital. She held little personal communication with her nurses. A nurse was never summoned to her office except for an important reason. She was the absolute dictator of the hospital, and her rule was a stern one.

When Janet had gone, Leslie Melville walked up and down the long corridor. He was heartsick with anxiety for the girl who had been called to the superintendent's office. He knew well what Miss Sprague's summons had meant to many nurses as hard-working and as faithful as Janet. He had seen them come from her office with white faces to leave the hospital, taking with them the stigma of expulsion. He knew the severity with which Miss Sprague's rigorous discipline was enforced. Breaches of hospital etiquette, innocent breaking of rules, harmless lapses from the strict hospital standard had been charges so serious that a record of faithful service had not prevailed against them. He knew that Miss Sprague held a prejudice against society girls as nurses. It was impossible that Janet, the petted, indulged, undisciplined child of a luxurious home, had been able to obey implicitly every rule of the institution.

In half an hour Janet appeared. He hurried to meet her. She had been crying, and the tears still clung to her lashes. He drew her to a window recess.

"What was it?" he asked anxiously. "Was it very serious?"

"It was the most serious thing that ever happened to me."

"Tell me about it," he urged impatiently. "Janet, dear, tell me; do you leave the hospital?"

"Yes."

"I feared it. She is cruel and unreasonable and unjust. You do not deserve her treatment of you. It is an outrage."

"She is not unreasonable—"

"I have hoped you would tire of the work and leave the hospital. I wanted you to give it up and marry me. But, for your own sake, I did

She Scoured Brass and Woodwork.

not want you to be expelled. Miss Sprague's cruel act will compel you to give up the profession. Won't you marry me I love you more than ever, Janet."

"You would marry a nurse who has been expelled, discredited?"

"I would marry you under any circumstances."

"Lester, why did you not ask me to marry you before I decided to become a nurse?"

"Why—why—you knew I loved you."

"You did not say so. You did not ask me to marry you until I told you I expected to enter the hospital. I was too angry and hurt to accept you. I have proved that I can be a nurse. Silly, frightened boy; you thought Sprague had expelled me. Look at my head."

On her hair rested the hospital cap. She had never worn one before.

"My probation ended today. Miss Sprague sent for me to tell me that I had done so well as a probationer that I was entitled to the ranks of the pupil nurses with the honor of wearing the hospital cap. She was lovely; she is not a bit hard or unreasonable. She talked so beautifully to me that I cried and she kissed me and set the cap on my head."

"But you said you were to leave the hospital."

"I am. I leave to marry you. I have demonstrated my ability to endure the hardest period of a nurse's life. I have learned how much you love me. I am ready to leave. I shall now demonstrate my ability to be a good wife."

CAUSE FOR JEALOUSY.

Wife—Wretch! Show me that letter!

Husband—What letter?

Wife—That in your hand. It's from a woman, I can see by the writing, and you turned pale when you saw it.

Husband—Yes. Here it is. It's your dressmaker's bill.

ITALY IS SLOW.

"Behold the ruins of Pompeii!"

"Been this way long?"

"Some eighteen hundred years."

"Bah! We had San Francisco built in less than six months."

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